

## **Board of Education Work Session**

December 12, 2022

Blair Public Library

2233 Civic Drive, Blair NE 68008

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Information concerning the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 84, Article 14 of Nebraska State Statutes, is posted in the room at a location accessible to members of the public and attached to the online agenda. The meeting notice was published in the Washington County Pilot-Tribune & Enterprise on Tuesday, December 6, 2022.

### **1. Call to Order**

Mrs. Kari Loseke, President, called the Board of Education Work Session to order at 6:45pm.

### **2. Roll Call**

Present Board Members: Kari Loseke, Brandi Petersen, Denise Cada, Laura Ronning, Bob Schoby, Brittney Gunderson, Steve Callaghan, Deb Parks and Ginger Fredericksen.

### **3. High Ability Learners (HAL) Presentation**

Mrs. Jennifer Bruck and Mr. Carson Norine, District HAL Program Coordinators, shared a presentation on the HAL Program at Blair Community Schools. They addressed the current HAL student numbers, plan to increase the service of who is seen, changes that are already in place this year to impact more kids, and goals for the future.

## **Board of Education Regular Meeting**

December 12, 2022

Blair Public Library

2233 Civic Drive, Blair NE 68008

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### **1. Call to Order**

Mrs. Kari Loseke, President, called the Board of Education Regular meeting to order at 7:18pm.

### **2. Roll Call**

Present Board Members: Kari Loseke, Denise Cada, Laura Ronning, Bob Schoby, Brittney Gunderson, Steve Callaghan, Deb Parks and Ginger Fredericksen.

### **3. Pledge of Allegiance**

Dr. Gilson led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. Approval of Emergency Additions to the Agenda – None**

**5. Call for Removal of Consent Agenda Items - None**

**6. Consent Agenda**

**Motion Passed:** I move to approve the Consent Agenda as presented passed with a motion by Laura Ronning and a second by Deb Parks.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Yes
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

**6.1. Waiver of reading minutes from previous meeting**

**6.2. Acceptance of minutes of the previous meeting as published**

**6.3. Receipt of Communications**

**6.4. Treasurer's Report**

**6.5. Audit of Claims**

**7. Business**

**7.1. Items removed from Consent Agenda - None**

**7.2. Recognitions**

**7.3. Acceptance of Gifts**

**7.3.1. CF Industries Grant Recipients**

Trent Bourgeois, Superintendent of CF Industries Blair Terminal, awarded mini grants totaling \$2,407.

The goal of the CF Industries Classroom Minigrant Program is to support local education and improve agricultural and environmental literacy. We would like to thank them for their continued support and commitment to Blair Community Schools.

**Motion Passed:** I move to accept CF Industries minigrant awards totaling \$2,407 passed with a motion by Ginger Fredericksen and a second by Brittney Gunderson.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Yes
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

## **7.4. Consideration of Communications**

### **7.4.1. Blair High School Dance Team**

Mr. Tyler Siecke, Activities Director, and Mrs. Sara Foulk and Mrs. Maureen Bray, Blair High School (BHS) Dance Coaches, requested permission for the BHS Dance Team to participate in the Midland University Cheer and Dance Festival on Sunday, January 29, 2023. This competition will help them prepare for their upcoming state competition in February 2023.

The administration is requesting permission for the dance team to attend the Midland University Cheer and Dance Festival.

**Motion Passed:** I move to approve the request for the Blair High School Dance Team to participate in the Midland University Cheer and Dance Festival on Sunday, January 29, 2023 passed with a motion by Laura Ronning and a second by Deb Parks.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Yes
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

## **7.5. Comments from The Public - None**

## **7.6. Committee Reports**

### **7.6.1. Policy Committee & Americanism Committee**

The Policy Committee & Americanism Committee met on Monday, November 21, 2022 at 12:00pm. A report from the committee was given by Deb Parks.

### **7.6.2. BG&T Committee**

The Buildings, Grounds, and Transportation Committee met on Tuesday, November 29, 2022 at 4:30pm. A report from the committee was given by Bob Schoby.

**Motion Passed:** I move to approve the purchase of three (3) new boilers for Otte Middle School for the estimated total of \$180,000 passed with a motion by Bob Schoby and a second by Steve Callaghan.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Yes
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

#### **7.6.4. Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee met on Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at 12:00pm. A report from the committee was given by Brandi Petersen.

#### **7.7. K-5 Configuration**

For the past year and a half, two (2) Ad Hoc Committees have been formed to recommend a five-year plan for the most effective use of educational programming, personnel, and facilities to support current and projected increases in student enrollment.

The first Ad Hoc team met for one year and was composed primarily of K-5 teachers and administrators. The second team has met to review the recommendations of the K-5 Ad Hoc team and to begin planning for the needs of grades 6-12. The goal of the Ad Hoc Committee was to develop a recommendation the school board could discuss and take action on in November 2022.

Both Ad Hoc teams determined that the enrollment is likely to increase due to the following facts. There has been an average of 50 new housing permits issued within the Blair city limits for the past three years. Blair is forecasted to continue to build 50 new houses per year. 59 houses per year equal about 2% growth or two new students per grade per year.

There has also been considerable new housing development throughout Washington County and there has been 25-45 new housing permits issued per year. Plus, growth in existing and new industry gives reason for the Ad Hoc committees to believe there will be a steady increase of about 2% in enrollment per year. In fact, it may be possible for Blair to receive additional growth beyond 2% some years. For example, between 2021 and 2022 BCS had a 5% increase or about 4.8 more students per grade level. This resulted in BCS adding an 8th section of K-2.

The Ad Hoc Committee shared many positive educational advantages to switching from a K-2 to a K-5. First, siblings only get to remain together in the same building for a short period of time making transportation and planning difficult for families. Educationally, the K-2 buildings have not had a counselor or principal in each building. Specials teachers and Special Education teachers have to travel shortening the time they can work directly with students. K-2 schedules are determined by specials schedules and travel availability of support staff instead of based on students' educational needs.

The gyms at North and South also must be used as cafeterias, so it forces specials times to occur during prime time reading and math instructional times. This shortens the time students get the opportunity for reading, literacy, and math instruction. The K-2 teachers also do not have daily planning time together due to having staff at three buildings.

Another benefit of having a K-5 configuration is that there would be a full-time principal, counselor, and high abilities teacher in each building. Plus, special education staff and reading specialists will be available on site. Also, the school personnel would get to know students more deeply because students would remain with their same school from kindergarten through 5th grade.

The committee studied the most efficient and effective grade level configurations and found only six similar size school districts (Falls City, Waverly, Norris, Nebraska City, Alliance, and Chadron) shared a K-2 configuration. These districts spent more per student (\$13,743) than students in a K-5

configuration (\$13,146). The K-5 configuration was the most common for Nebraska schools of similar size. The cost per pupil in Blair for all schools in the 2020-21 school year was \$12,008 per student overall, but in K-2 it was (\$14,316).

The Committee determined that BCS could save as much as \$800,000 in certified staff and \$220,000 in classified staff annually if it were to move from a K-2 to a K-5 configuration. At a recent joint public meeting between the school district, county, and city agencies. 133 taxpayers attended and were firm in asking the school district to ‘tighten their belts’ and search for creative ways to control spending. The savings could be reinvested in the needs students have and can be used to reduce property taxes.

The Arbor Park building would house four sections of K-5 for all students who have attended North and South Elementary school. The Deerfield building would serve as a K-5 building for all students who have or will attend Deerfield.

The Ad Hoc committee also learned that there is a community-wide need for expanded early childhood education opportunities. The South building is ideal for allowing BCS to offer the same and expand on early childhood and preschool opportunities. The North Building would house the district's program to support students with behavioral and social needs. These students have been contracted outside the district from \$30,000 - \$40,000 per student. North would also house district office staff and some special education staff.

New playground equipment is necessary at Deerfield and Arbor Park. Preschool playground equipment would be added at South Elementary. The district also would look at adding restrooms for kindergarten classrooms at Arbor Park.

There are currently 65 third grade students at Arbor Park who attended Deerfield and 57 fourth graders. If a proposal is passed by the school board to convert from a K-2 to K-5 configuration, these students would return to Deerfield to make up three sections at each grade level. All students attending North and South would attend K-5 at Arbor Park.

**Motion Passed (as Amended):** I move for Blair Community Schools to change to a K-5 Configuration beginning the 2023-24 school year passed with a motion by Brandi Petersen and a second by Deb Parks.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Yes
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

**Motion Amended:** I move for Blair Community Schools to change the elementary grade level configuration from a K-2 to K-5 and designate Arbor Park School and Deerfield Primary to be K-5 buildings, South Primary be an Early Childhood Center and Preschool to address expanding preschool needs, and for the District Office and Skills Academy be located at North Primary to support students with behavioral needs effective for the 2023-24 school year passed with a

motion by Brandi Petersen and a second by Laura Ronning.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Yes
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

**7.8. Approval of New Teachers – None**

**7.9. Acceptance of Resignation – None**

**7.10. Superintendent Report**

Dr. Ladwig, Executive Director of Learning, shared a presentation on NSCAS Spring testing 2022 results.

**7.11. Informational Item**

**8. Adjournment**

**Motion Passed:** I move to adjourn meeting at 8:26pm passed with a motion by Bob Schoby and a second by Steve Callaghan.

Denise Cada	Yes
Steve Callaghan	Yes
Ginger Fredericksen	Yes
Brittney Gunderson	Yes
Kari Loseke	Yes
Deb Parks	Yes
Brandi Petersen	Yes
Laura Ronning	Yes
Bob Schoby	Yes

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Angie Conety  
Secretary Board of Education

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Randall Gilson, Ed.D.  
Superintendent